



In the Footsteps of the Buddha: A Pilgrimage of Collective Awakening in India & Nepal

Commemorating Thích Nhất Hạnh's 100th Birthday

October 3 - 16, 2026

with Plum Village Tradition
Dharma teachers Shantum Seth and Brian Kimmel (Bk)

A two-week pilgrimage through the sacred sites of the Buddha's life, including Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar. **Limited to 18 participants**

Extensions:

Agra and the Taj Mahal (October 16-17, 2026)

Ajanta and Ellora caves (Oct 17-20, 2026)

“In times of turmoil, we return to the source.”

2,600 years ago, amidst great social upheaval, Siddhartha Gautama made the radical choice to “go forth”—leaving behind the known world to find a path to liberation that could serve all beings. Today, as we navigate our own era of division and uncertainty, we are called to walk that same path.

This is not a vacation. It is a response.

Join us for a transformative pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Buddha's life in India and Nepal. We walk to touch the earth of his awakening, to resource our spirits, and to cultivate the resilience needed to meet our world with compassion and clarity.

For More Information & To Express Interest: retreats@briankimmel.com

The Preparation: A dedicated study and practice group virtual and in-person segments, open to all, will be held leading up to the pilgrimage exploring *Old Path White Clouds*, the socially engaged Buddhism of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, and the Buddha's mother preparing our hearts for the road ahead.

Preparation study of three seminal texts:

- **Thích Nhất Hạnh's *Old Path, White Clouds*** to ground us in the life of the Buddha.
- **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's *The Buddha and His Dhamma*** to explore the path of Engaged Buddhism and social liberation.
- **The story of Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī** and the first ordained women to honor the deep roots of female leadership in our tradition.

"The walk of one person can be lonely, but the walk of a Sangha is a revolution."

Dharmacharya Shantum Seth is a teacher who was Transmitted the Lamp by Thich Nhat Hanh in 2001. He is the foremost expert on sites associated with the Buddha and has been leading pilgrimages since 1988. He worked with the United Nations on volunteering, peace, and social development for more than 15 years, and has been a Senior Advisor to the World Bank and the Government of India on pilgrimage tourism. He has co-authored books such as *Walking with the Buddha*, *Volunteers against Conflict* and been a consultant for films like BBC-Discovery's *Life of the Buddha* and BBC-PBS's *The Story of India*.



At each pilgrimage site along the way, Shantum will tell stories of the Buddha's life and offer teachings to help us understand the Buddha as a human being, the drama of his life and the significance of what he taught. We will schedule time for daily sitting and walking meditation, regular discussions, and contemplative time for ourselves. The creation of a traveling sangha will be an important aspect of this trip, giving the journey a greater cohesiveness and building a sense of support for those seeking to deepen their practice.

Dharmācārya Brian Kimmel (Bk) is a Plum Village Dharma teacher, licensed mental health counselor, and educator based in Seattle. A dedicated practitioner for over two decades, Bk ordained into the Order of Interbeing in 2006 and was among the final cohort to receive the Lamp Transmission from Thich Nhat Hanh in 2021.

Bk's work focuses on healing, community building, and is informed by his Indonesian-Minahasan-European heritage. A key moment was his 2010 return to his ancestral lands to help ordain the first Indonesian Order of Interbeing members. He has extensive global retreat leadership experience and co-coordinated the first North American Wake Up Tour for young adults.



Author of the award-winning memoir *Blue Skies, Troubled Waters*, Bk uses "Embodying Narratives"—story, song, and somatic practice—to heal intergenerational trauma. For this pilgrimage, he serves as a spiritual friend and facilitator, guiding participants to walk as a Sangha and "touch the earth of the Buddha's life" for collective awakening and resilience.